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UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 000602

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E, AF/RSA, AND IO/UNP
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA WATCHER
CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD

SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI ON SOMALI PIRACY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UNCSR 1816

REF: STATE 74305 (NOTAL)

11. (SBU) PolOff delivered reftel points to Djibouti Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Director of Bilateral Affairs Youssouf Aden Moussa on July 17.

12. (SBU) Moussa reemphasized Djibouti's vital national interest in combating piracy off the Somali coast, especially to protect the security and economic viability of the Port of Djibouti. Moussa had no immediate response on concrete steps the GODJ might take in implementing UNCSR 1816, but said he would transmit the points to the Ministry of Justice and other relevant GODJ technical agencies for comment. Post will follow up with the MFA and report any subsequent responses.

13. (SBU) COMMENT: While the Djiboutian Navy participated in interdiction exercises earlier this year with French and U.S. military representatives as part of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), the relatively small size of Djibouti's military limits its ability to participate effectively in CTF-150. Moreover, at least one-half to three-fourths of Djibouti's military forces are currently forward deployed in northeastern Djibouti, due to recent border tensions with Eritrea. The Djiboutian Navy is comprised of approximately 18 small craft, including several small boats provided by the USG. Although the GODJ supports this concept, the operational reach of the Djiboutian Navy is limited to its territorial waters. It is further restricted to patrols close to existing bases due to the limited range and endurance of its inventory. Their current capability does not support effective patrolling near Somali territorial waters, nor does it support effective and persistent patrols in international waters adjacent to Djiboutian territorial waters. The USG, using FY07 Section 1206 funds, is constructing a naval pier at Obock, in northern Djibouti; its completion, anticipated by October 2008, will enhance the Djiboutian Navy's ability to patrol its coastal waters. Djibouti does host German military representatives supporting the German frigate participating in CTF-150; earlier this year, Djibouti also cooperated with French military forces rescuing hostages from a hijacked French vessel. In implementing UNCSR 1816, the GODJ is more likely to be able to offer other types of assistance, such as judicial assistance, rather than naval support. END COMMENT.

WONG